

I am a singer/songwriter and beginning producer. I recorded my first album in Nashville 10 years ago and have been working off and on in the business since then. Because of the cost of recording and producing an album, I've been unable to do another professional release as of yet.

I am not seeking a large label because of the small amount of money that the artist usually can recoup. Therefore, I must rely solely upon word of mouth or possible airplay for any piece that I am lucky enough to record.

I usually perform two or three times a month, which is all the time I can eek out at the moment! I don't have an organized following, per se, because those who like me can't buy any of my current songs (not professionally recorded), and I don't even have a web-site they can access. These difficulties could be tackled, if I felt the cost would be recouped. Without airplay, it would be difficult to do that. Every time I perform, people come talk to me afterwards and like what I'm doing, but I can't refer them to a website or sell an album, so it's moot. Recording is so expensive--especially when you need a full sound like my music would require. The only way I could recoup my costs would be to get airplay so I have a wider customer base.

From the research I've done recently, it appears that it's next-to-impossible to get local airplay, let alone national airplay--unless you sign with one of the big labels.

I haven't tried to contact any radio stations because I've heard they almost "sell" radio time to the labels these days. Plus, I never, NEVER hear local music on the radio, so I assume this information is correct. Although, once a year, ONE station in my area does a one-hour local artist airing in the month of November or December.

The stations in my area are mostly owned by huge companies and I believe they are mostly told what to play. So, it's unfortunate for the listeners because they can't hear some of their local favorites.

For example, there is a local performer here who sells out his concerts and makes quite a bit on CD sales. I love his music and would LOVE to hear him on the radio, as would his numerous fans. But he is never played on any stations, as far as I know. I did hear him once on the afore-mentioned once-a-year show. He was superb and there's no reason for him to not be on the radio.

As far as I'm concerned, it would be easier to rationalize spending the money to record my next album if it could possibly be played on the radio. I would be able to expect higher sales, which would mean I could easily break even and possibly make money.

I am not well-versed in the intricacies of "local programming," so I don't know exactly what the best approach is; however, I do know that the local stations don't seem very "local" to me. They seem to be playing a play list that is dictated by the larger owning force.

I think, ideally, local programming would include local performers or producers.

I think it would be great if local programming included local school games, local music, local news, etc. I can't imagine how playing local music could

NOT count towards local programming--is that truly the case? If so, it's absurd.

I don't think a station's participation in local activities should count toward their localism requirement. Those are activities that any organization participates in to engender goodwill.

I have heard that companies are "buying time" from stations, and that their artists are getting play time due to these "purchases."

I think it's obviously unethical (and should also be illegal) for anyone to influence what a DJ plays on the radio. The music played should be decided by the listeners, and radio stations should actively seek out listeners' feedback. Back in the 70's, it seems that people could call in any time, day or night, and request any song. These days, I never hear that going on--except for a "special request" show that airs super late at night.

As far as voice-tracking goes, I think the community deserves to know where the show originates. I don't see a problem with voice-tracking as long as it's clear to the listener that the show is pre-recorded and originates from somewhere else.

I have heard a lot about these "national playlists" and how it's virtually impossible to get any radioplay if you aren't signed with a major label.

In my area--where I've been told we are second only to LA in number of stations--I can't find anything good or original on the radio. And I'm not picky. I like all types of music. But I'm hearing the same old stuff everywhere I turn--re-manufactured formula music. In contrast, there are numerous great artists in my area that don't get any radioplay, notwithstanding their large fan base.

It seems extremely unlikely that the local stations are making any of the play decisions right now. I do believe something needs to be done, although I'm not sure a set percentage would always work, since some areas may have very few artists good enough for radio. However, since the stations can't seem to be ethical themselves, something should be done.

I love the idea of LPFM stations, although I'm not sure the cost is low enough for many groups to utilize the idea. I think LPFM stations would definitely help the music community because then there would be another vehicle to get your music into the ears of potential fans.

It seems to me that there should be MANY low power licenses offered in larger communities.

Thank you for your time and concern dealing with this issue. I am sure you have tough jobs (and unpleasant jobs at times!) Please consider the plight of the unsigned musician and the plight of the listening public who are subjected to very few listening choices. I wish you the best in trying resolve these issues to the satisfaction of all parties.

